

# CHIMES

the Magazine of the College of Visual and Performing Arts

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Cover: The Warehouse lights  
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## VPA CLASSIFIED WHERE'S MY NOTES?

### LOOKING FOR ALUMNI NOTES?

Stay tuned this fall for a new addition to the *Chimes* magazine family that will include alumni news and even more happenings in the College of Visual and Performing Arts.

**GOT ALUMNI NEWS TO SHARE?**  
We'd love to hear from you! E-mail us at [chimes@syr.edu](mailto:chimes@syr.edu) or mail them to Amy Patrick, VPA Alumni Relations Coordinator, 200 Crouse College, Syracuse University, Syracuse NY 13244-1010.



Part of Chancellor Nancy Cantor's "Scholarship in Action" vision for Syracuse University involves those of us on the Hill reaching beyond campus and engaging with other communities, be they local, national, or international. In the College of Visual and Performing Arts, this means more than simply encouraging students, faculty, and staff to visit downtown cultural spots or teach and study abroad (already two aspects of education that we have long championed). Over the past two years, the college has worked with other areas of the University to offer the VPA community incredible new programs and opportunities that give new meaning to the word "outreach."


In this issue of *Chimes* Magazine, you will see examples of how the college has established a presence for itself not only in Syracuse but in New York City; Los Angeles; Florence, Italy; and many points in between. This past semester we moved the School of Art and Design's programs in advertising design and communications design to the Warehouse, the University's recently renovated downtown building, and we are one of SU's first academic units to participate in an educational partnership with the Syracuse City School District. The Syracuse International Film and Video Festival, whose founder and artistic director is a longtime VPA faculty member, brings the best independent films and filmmakers from around the world to our city each year. Distinguished drama alumni Arielle Tepper '94 and Aaron Sorkin '83 have generously helped us establish immersion programs for our students in New York City and Los Angeles, respectively, and our friends at SU's Florence center have given our students the ability to perform and work behind the scenes for the *Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino*, one of Italy's premiere opera houses.

As you will read, all of these initiatives give our students and faculty an incredible edge in their academic and creative pursuits. For those of you *Chimes* readers who are VPA alumni, know that your enthusiastic global network plays a crucial role in our success and the creation and growth of these programs.

While summer is usually relatively quiet on campus, we did make a special announcement in June. Thanks to the support of SU alumnus Martin Bandier '62, chairman and co-CEO of EMI Music Publishing, the college plans to institute the Bandier Program in Music and the Entertainment Industries. This undergraduate, multidisciplinary program will prepare students for a career in the music and entertainment industries. In addition to their coursework in VPA, they will take classes at Newhouse, the Whitman School of Management, and the College of Arts and Sciences. A gift from EMI Music Publishing will also allow us to establish the EMI Center for Internship, Mentoring, and Career Development to further help these students. You can read more about the program and Martin Bandier in the features and news section of the college's web site ([vpa.syr.edu](http://vpa.syr.edu)).

And speaking of the web site, please take a moment to check out its recent redesign. In addition to our features and news section, you will find a news ticker for announcements, an expanded section for alumni, and an events calendar that now features audio and video Setnor Auditorium concert streaming.

As always, I welcome your thoughts about the college. Please feel free to contact me at [chimes@syr.edu](mailto:chimes@syr.edu) with any comments or questions.



## Thoughts from the Dream Factory

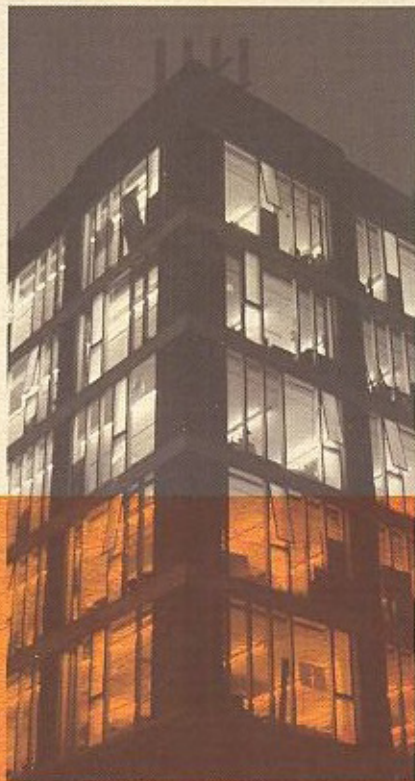
with Dean Carole Brzozowski



# IN-HAUS DESIGN

two VPA programs  
help bring the  
hill downtown  
to SU's warehouse

warehouse



VPA



As the elevators part on the third floor of the Warehouse, Syracuse University's downtown building, a sign welcomes you to the College of Visual and Performing Arts' programs in advertising design and communications design. On this particular Saturday in April, the floor is buzzing with visitors from the Syracuse community who are here as part of the University's open house. Two women perusing the student exhibitions stop and read the sign and turn to a group of faculty standing nearby. "What is the difference between advertising design and communications design?" one of them asks.

"Well, they're spelled differently," kids Bill Padgett, an associate professor of communications design. His faculty colleague, Rod Martinez, explains by using an example of the United Parcel Service (UPS) and legendary designer Paul Rand. "At first the communications designer establishes the overall concept of look and feel, such as the graphic identity and trademark color brown, and then the advertisers determine how best to reach their audience with print, broadcast, and television media."

This type of community interaction is exactly what the University and Chancellor Nancy Cantor had in mind when they purchased and renovated the former Dunk & Bright furniture warehouse on East Fayette Street in 2005. Envisioned as a multi-use space for both the University and the Syracuse

community, the building serves as a cornerstone of Chancellor Cantor's Connective Corridor, which links the people and activities of the University and downtown Syracuse. The \$12.6 million project was completed for the spring 2006 semester under the direction of the renowned New York City firm Gluckman Mayner Architects in partnership with VIP Structures, Inc. of Syracuse.

The 135,000-square-foot building has seven floors. In addition to the advertising and communications design programs, it houses the Newhouse School's Goldring Arts Journalism Program (ground floor) and serves as a temporary home for the School of Architecture (floors four through seven) while its permanent, on-campus building, Slocum Hall, is renovated. The expansive first floor and ground floor are home to many services for students, faculty, and staff, including the Warehouse Café, SU Department of Public Safety desk and office, and an SU Bookstore satellite operation. Community spaces on these floors include an art gallery, lecture hall, box office, a home for arts education collaboration between SU and the Everson Museum of Art, and artist support and development space in partnership with Syracuse's Cultural Resources Council. These spaces are open free of charge to various community nonprofit arts organizations and are supported by donations from local foundations, corporations, and private gifts. (For a virtual tour and floor plan of the Warehouse, visit [warehouse.syr.edu](http://warehouse.syr.edu).)





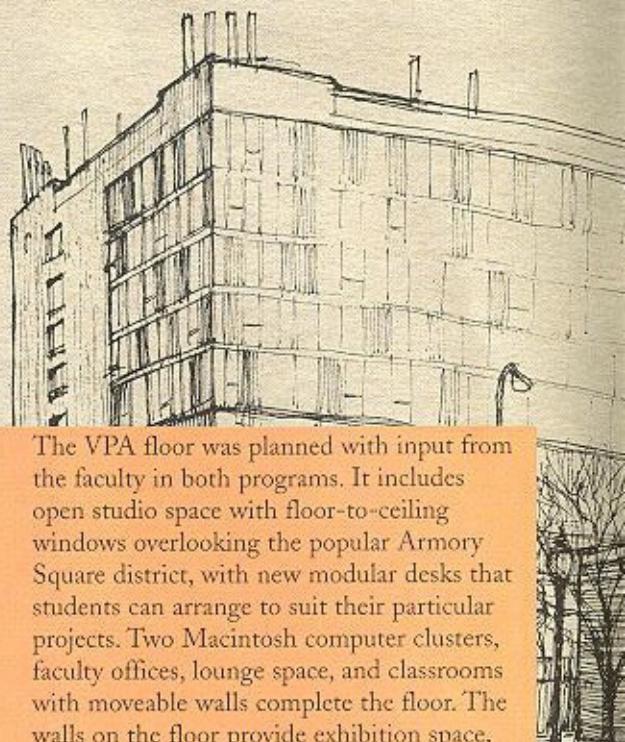
communications



advertising

For VPA, the choice to move two of its design programs in the School of Art and Design from Shaffer Art Building to their own floor in the Warehouse made complete sense considering the nature of the disciplines and the many downtown design firms. "It is exciting to know our advertising and communications design students and faculty are able to take advantage of a downtown learning environment," says Dean Carole Brzozowski. "These programs can make strong connections with our friends in the local arts community, including those sharing space in the Warehouse. The opportunities for creative collaboration are limitless."

"The location of the Warehouse is ideal for design students," says Matt Applebaum '06, a communications design major. "Students are exposed to a whole other area of Syracuse that they otherwise rarely, if ever, experience. Also, pairing the advertising and communications design students with architecture students in the building creates a more 'professional' design setting. The unique architecture, furniture, café, ongoing exhibitions in the lobby, and even the fact that everyone dresses up a notch or two above normal college standards add to this air of professionalism."



The VPA floor was planned with input from the faculty in both programs. It includes open studio space with floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the popular Armory Square district, with new modular desks that students can arrange to suit their particular projects. Two Macintosh computer clusters, faculty offices, lounge space, and classrooms with moveable walls complete the floor. The walls on the floor provide exhibition space, which was used for the abundance of student work displayed at the open house.

Both programs have already taken advantage of this new creative atmosphere and outreach opportunities. Advertising design students in Steven Montgomery's senior-level branding course helped Rochester, New York-based marketer Wet Planet Beverages stage a comeback for its national brand Jolt Cola. Wet Planet CEO and founder C.J. Rapp came to Syracuse to present student teams with cash awards for best campaign, video, and art direction. Communication design students in Iris Magidson's design project management course worked with the Harriet Tubman Home in Auburn, New York, and the AME Zion Church, the not-for-profit owner and manager of the property, to propose exhibitions for the visitor center and



design a self-guided walking tour of the site. "This opportunity opens the door to a whole new concept in the education of our students," says Toni Toland, associate professor of advertising design, about the Jolt assignment. "Not only are the students dealing with a contemporary branding opportunity, they're being challenged to think about advertising in new and innovative ways, all within the context of realistic parameters. It's a win/win situation for everyone." (Read and see more about these projects in our "Features" section at [vpa.syr.edu](http://vpa.syr.edu)).

Although the classes related to these majors are held at the Warehouse, advertising and communications design students are still very much a part of campus life. First-year students take all of their classes on Main Campus, and upperclass students take their electives there as well. Transportation was designed with this in mind; shuttle bus service to and from Main Campus runs on a 24/7 basis, with increased frequency during the academic year. Students may also opt to use a nearby city-owned parking garage at a discounted rate, as the two small SU-owned lots near the building are used by faculty and staff.

Having access to both environments has its advantages, particularly when it comes to coursework. "Being geographically separated from Main Campus allows our work at the Warehouse to be much more focused," notes Applebaum. "If you go there for studio or class time, that is exactly what you will be doing. No side errands or quick visits home—just work."

The college hopes its presence at the Warehouse will grow in the coming years, particularly after the School of Architecture moves back to Slocum Hall. "Our advertising and communications design students, faculty, and staff are doing a wonderful job as our downtown ambassadors, so we are exploring other ways the college can take advantage of the space and the collaborative environment," says Dean Brzozowski.

—Erica Blust



# GOOD NEIGHBORS

**VPA Takes a Leading Role in  
Establishing SU Partnership  
Programs with Syracuse  
City Schools**



“One girl responds immediately with a **grand** and joyful **vision**”

One sunny Tuesday morning, art teacher Mary Lynn Mahan is excited to introduce a group of artists-in-residence to her fifth-grade class at Syracuse's Ed Smith Elementary School. The six artists are Syracuse University students who will work with the fifth-graders for several weeks on a photography project as part of the coursework for their Literacy Through Photography (LTP) class taught by College of Visual and Performing Arts faculty Doug DuBois, associate professor of art photography, and Judith Meighan, assistant professor of foundation. SU graduate student Phaedra Gauci enthusiastically explains the project to her small circle of students, promising to teach them how to use cameras and telling them their work will be exhibited at SU. She shows off her own photography journal and extends an invitation to the children in her group to explore ideas for their own creations. One girl responds immediately with a grand and joyful vision of the journal she'll make. "I'm going to take a picture of my house," she says, arms extended, hands waving. "My house is huge! You can get lost in there."

At Syracuse University, the LTP class is a yearlong pilot project of the recently established The Partnership for Better Education, which seeks to further a mutually beneficial, long-term partnership between SU and the Syracuse City School District and provide city school teachers and students access to SU's intellectual and financial resources in the arts, literacy, inclusion, and science and technology. VPA is a leading college in the partnership, offering city schools such resources as teacher workshops, artist-in-residence programs, and fund-raising support. The college collaborated on the LTP project with SU's Light Work, the Soling Program, and the Syracuse Symposium. Based on the innovative arts education program developed by documentary photographer Wendy Ewald, who kicked off the project with a lecture at Light Work, LTP encourages children to explore their worlds by photographing and writing about scenes from their lives. The collaboration also included a workshop for Syracuse city school teachers and SU students.



# painting performance writing drama photography art video



Mahan says her students experience benefits on many levels through the University's involvement, including the opportunity to develop black-and-white prints in a campus darkroom. "The partnership provides elementary students with exposure to college students who are excited and engaged in education and the arts," she says. "It is wonderful for the Ed Smith kids to witness and participate in this process."

Benefits for VPA faculty and students include workshops in arts integration and courses in the history and studio practices of community-based art. "We can change our thinking of the arts as marginalized and under-funded by making art part of education at every level, in every subject," says Meighan.

The Partnership for a Better Education, which was launched in the city's eastside quadrant and is expanding to include all of Syracuse, begins with programming in the elementary grades and threads its way through middle and high school. For example, the

second phase of the Partnership model that began at Ed Smith Elementary with the LTP project is a middle school program for English as a Second Language (ESL) students at HW Smith School. Titled "Autobiographies and Scriptwriting," the project pairs Nottingham High School drama students with ESL students from around the world, whom they interview to draw out their personal stories. The stories then serve as the basis for writing dramatic plays. The project helps students develop cross-cultural skills and understanding, while meeting the district's English language arts learning standards.

A third phase of the partnership takes place in Nottingham High School's Video Production and Scriptwriting class, a collaboration between the school's English department, SU's film program, and Syracuse Stage that is led by Owen Shapiro, coordinator of the VPA film program, and Len Fonte, a teacher at Nottingham. Now in its third year, the program introduces students to all aspects of video and film production, including





surface pattern design

sculpture

film

computer art production

scriptwriting, journaling, interviewing, and researching, as well as filming and editing. Students participated as pre-screeners of the Syracuse International Film and Video Festival entrants. In addition, a community screening of their own film projects will be held at the Everson Museum of Art.

Also at Nottingham, "The Layering Project" was a cross-curricular collaboration involving the high school, VPA, and Syracuse Stage. Working with Ann Clarke, assistant professor of fiber arts, students in Advanced Art and Advanced Placement English 12 explored the meshing of text and image and its connection to Syracuse Stage's production of *Intimate Apparel*. Students participated in hands-on workshops in performance writing and play analysis and learned new fiber arts skills. Their artwork and artist's statements were exhibited in the theater's lobby throughout the play's run.

Another aspect of The Partnership for a Better Education is the Visiting Artists Series that was launched at Nottingham High School this past spring, bringing VPA faculty and graduate students in such areas as art video, sculpture, computer art, painting, and surface pattern design to the school to talk about their work. Additionally, SU's Pulse program, which VPA co-sponsors, has been opened up to Nottingham students, providing opportunities to attend performances by the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra, VPA's Department of Drama, and others.

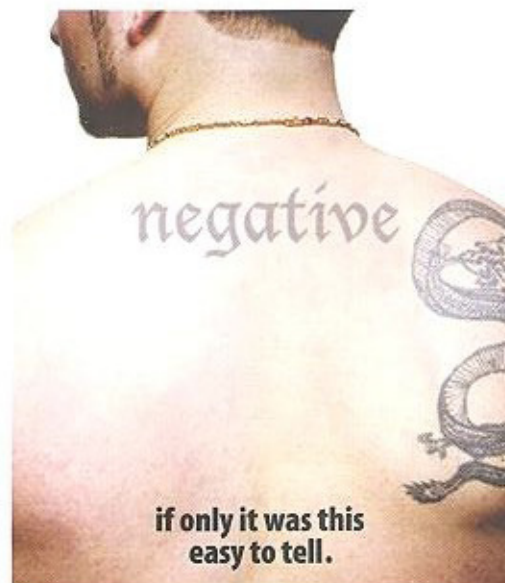
—Amy Shires





## Something to Talk About

Students in the Department of Communication and Rhetorical Studies and the School of Art and Design's advertising design program helped design, implement, evaluate, and launch "Talk, Condoms, and Test (TCT)," a public service campaign launched at Syracuse University this past year. TCT promotes communication, safer sex practices, and HIV and STD testing to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted disease. The collaborative project was created by Sandra Faulkner, assistant professor of communication and rhetorical studies; Matthew Kiechle, health education and wellness coordinator for SU Health Services; and Matt Walz, Safety First project coordinator for AIDS Community Resources.



**talk to your partner. use condoms. get tested.**

For free, anonymous HIV counseling and testing,  
call the NYS Health Department at: 800-562-9423.

For confidential services (including HIV and STD testing)  
at SU Health Services, call: 315-443-9005.



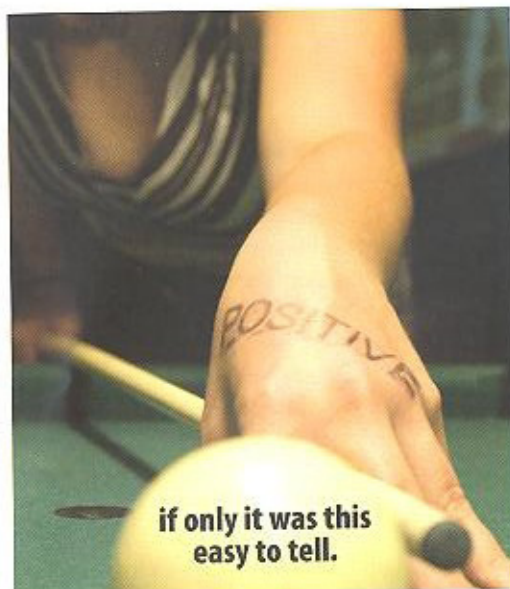
[students.syr.edu/health/tct/](http://students.syr.edu/health/tct/)



TCT was initially created to help inform higher risk groups due to a decrease in HIV and STD testing on campus. It was developed by students to address perceptions and practices that may place their peers at risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.

According to project organizers, how young adults discuss sexual issues represents an important component of their close relationships. The desire to form and maintain romantic relationships often precludes discussion about safer sex and may keep partners from discussing it fully to preserve these relationships.





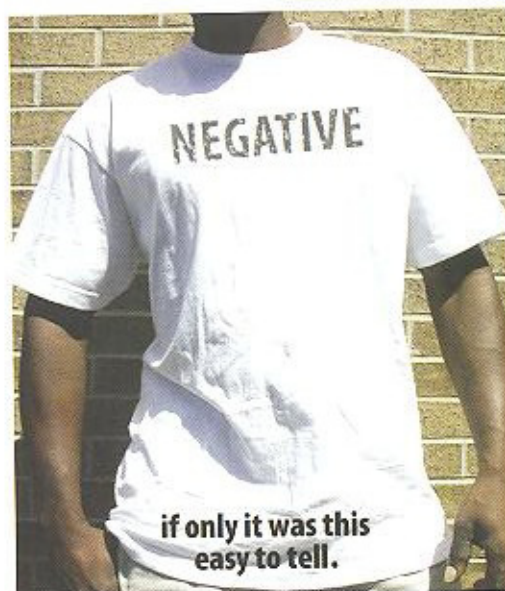
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Faulkner and students in her Empirical Methods of Communication Research class conducted assessment and research, holding focus groups with SU students to come up with themes for the campaign. This tied into their studies, addressing ideas of basic interpersonal communication theory, sexual talk, and sexuality in relationships. For the visual aspect, Faulkner's class worked with Earl Carter, assistant professor of advertising design, and his Advertising Design Research class to create images for the campaign.

They selected five from approximately 20 proposed images, using focus groups to determine what worked best. The images can be seen across campus and in the local community.

*-Jaime Winne Alvarez*





# EAST COAST west coast

**From Theatre Row to the Sunset Strip**

*There's No Business Like Show Business. That's Why it Helps to Have Arielle Tepper and Aaron Sorkin on Your Side.*

They may live on opposite coasts of the country, but Arielle Tepper '94 and Aaron Sorkin '83 have much in common. Both are graduates of the Department of Drama. Both are award-winning producers: Tepper's recent Broadway credits include the Tony Award-winning *Monty Python's Spamalot* and the Tony-nominated *Democracy* and *The Pillowman*; Sorkin, also a screen and television writer/creator, had his award-winning *The West Wing* wrap last year after seven seasons on NBC, with his

next project, *Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip*, debuting on the network this fall. And both have given generously of their time and resources to help the College of Visual and Performing Arts create two immersion programs that help students better understand the entertainment industry and what it takes to succeed as professional artists.



On the East Coast, Tepper established the Tepper Semester in the Department of Drama in fall 2005 to offer advanced undergraduate drama students from SU and other colleges and universities the unique opportunity to immerse themselves in the New York City theater scene and benefit from an arts network especially for emerging young artists-in-training. Always eager to help students transition into the professional world, Tepper had already established the department's Tepper Center for Careers in Theatre, which includes a Professional Practices course that gives students access to guest artists, workshops, field trips, a lecture series, and a week in New York City attending plays and workshops taught by members of the industry. The Tepper Semester expands on these experiences, allowing students to study and live in the city. (For the inaugural semester, the 17 students enrolled took classes on Theatre Row and lived in the New Yorker Hotel.)

For Tepper Semester students, training is intensive and incorporates the areas of theater, film, and television; the 19-credit curriculum is comprehensive, with classes ranging from voice and movement to auditioning and professional development. The instruction is second-to-none, with the full-time faculty consisting of such artists and industry pros as casting directors James Calleri (Calleri Casting) and David Caparelliottis (Manhattan Theatre Club); director Daisy Prince (*Songs for a New World*); project director Rebecca Guy (the Juilliard School); movement instructor Daryl Quinton (Arts Connection, Dance Theatre of Harlem); and designated Linklater teachers Andrea Harring (Yale, Columbia) and Elena McGhee (Yale, Fordham). The

program also makes time for students to explore the cultural offerings of the city, including on- and off-Broadway plays; last year, students met with *Pillowman* actors Billy Crudup and Jeff Goldblum as well as the cast of *Doubt* as part of these experiences. Students may also intern at the New York City Summer Play Festival for Emerging Writers (SPF), which Tepper founded.

In March 2006, Sorkin made it possible for 10 drama students and two film students from the college's Department of Transmedia to spend Spring Break in Los Angeles learning about the industry on the West Coast. "Sorkin Week" featured workshops and meetings with professional actors, writers, agents, producers, and directors, many of whom were SU alumni. Among other Sorkin Week activities were an acting workshop with Sorkin at Warner Bros.; the opportunity to sit in on a script reading with the cast of *Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip*; a VPA student film showcase at the Silent Movie Theatre in Hollywood; and a dinner with Sorkin at his home. The experience was part of a week-long spotlight on SU's presence in Los Angeles, coordinated in part by Syracuse University Los Angeles (SULA), a satellite office offering a wide range of social and educational activities engaging alumni, friends, parents, and future students.

Thanks to Tepper Semester student Alison Bennett '05 and Sorkin Week participants Rachel Moulton '06 and Matt Britten '07 for sharing their impressions of these two unique opportunities with us on the following pages.

—Erica Blust



When I first read about Sorkin Week in the drama department newsletter, I did a dance of unadulterated joy. I immediately knew that an opportunity such as this would be exponentially valuable to me as I cross the threshold between SU and Los Angeles with my acting degree in hand. If you asked me last summer where I was going for Spring Break '06, I most likely would have named one of the typical tropical destinations. I had no idea that, thanks to a generous donation of funding and time from Aaron Sorkin, a VPA alum and one of my favorite writers, 11 other students and I would do Spring Break—Hollywood style.

During the week we toured major studios and met with casting directors, agents, producers, writers, and actors. Many times I could hardly believe it was all really happening—like when I got to read at a script table with Amanda Peet, or when I was walking through Warner Bros., turned around, and there was my favorite *West Wing* staffer, Bradley Whitford.

Sorkin Week provided me with the chance to network with a wide palette of people in the entertainment industry, an opportunity that any acting student moving to Hollywood would give anything for. On the night of our first full day, Aaron hosted a reception for us at his beautiful home

overlooking Los Angeles. There I was able to meet a lot of interesting SU alumni in various high-level entertainment industry positions. For a boy from Michigan, this really was an opportunity to put my tenacity to the test. In the end, it really paid off, and I went home that night with many new contacts and tidbits of advice that will be very helpful as I start my career.

One conversation from the night that was of particular interest to me was with VPA alum and former SU Alumni Club of Southern California president Rob Edwards '85 about making more connections between graduating students who are coming out to L.A. and the wealth of talented SU alumni in the southern California area. He had some great ideas, and, of course, Sorkin Week is an exciting new addition. I am so grateful for all of the work done by our alumni to put this week together, and I look forward to doing my part to help those who make the move to California after me.

Sorkin Week provided the perfect enhancement to my education at SU. I was able to gain insight that connected the skills I am learning in the classroom to how I will be able to apply them to my career. I am indebted to Aaron for his generosity and his anecdotes, to Joan Adler of SULA, and to everyone else involved. It was thrilling to be a part of such an exciting effort to bring snowy Syracuse and sunny Los Angeles a little bit closer together. I look forward with great anticipation to making the cross-country move next year.

—Matt Britten '07,  
acting major



I first  
learned about the  
Tepper Semester while  
I was a junior studying abroad  
in London, in the SU drama pro-  
gram at the Globe Theatre. At that point in  
time, I had my upcoming year planned out  
nicely—I was going to be a senior, and that  
meant glamour (the Syracuse kind, in parkas)  
with some sort of John Hughes movie sound-  
track playing over hugging montages.

But the opportunity to do the New York  
program became impossible to resist, so I  
eventually came around to scrapping my  
whole senior year plan. I moved to New York  
in June (before the program), cracked out  
another semester for SU, and then graduated  
early and stayed in the city. Doing this  
program changed the whole trajectory of  
my college career and my life. It was definitely  
worth it.

In the months since the Tepper Semester  
ended, the classes still stand out the most for  
me. I loved seeing all the theater, and my  
daily eggs at the Theatre Row diner with my  
friends, but the intensity of my educational  
experience really made an impression on me.  
I was never a person who ate, dreamt, and  
slept acting, and for a whole semester, I was  
completely immersed in theater. I didn't do  
a conservatory program because I was wary  
of abandoning my other interests in college,  
but I thrived in that kind of atmosphere.  
I loved it.

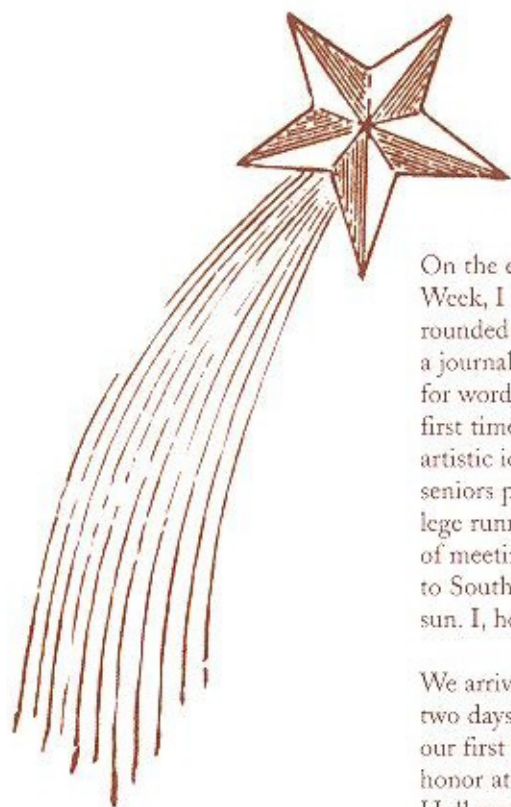
My work really progressed, and every  
Tuesday night in the theater I was inspired to  
get up and work really  
hard because I  
got to watch  
people living  
my dream. It  
was such a  
serious,  
focused

time in my life,  
and those habits  
have continued even  
though I graduated in  
December. I'm taking all these  
classes in New York right now:  
improv (somewhat new to me) and yoga (I'm  
definitely not naturally athletic). I attribute  
my new interests to the Tepper Semester  
because it forced me to stretch myself every  
day. It's cheesy, but I am trying to maintain  
that focus.

I think that abroad programs (even in  
the same state) can be the most influential  
parts of a person's college career, and the  
Tepper Semester is invaluable if you are  
interested in theater. I honestly believe that  
it cuts off a few years of trying to figure out  
acting life in New York. As I said, I graduated  
in December, and although I certainly don't  
know all the answers, I have met a lot of  
actors who are 24 and 25 years old, and after  
hearing about the program, they pick my  
brain about what I learned. There is just no  
other program like this in the country, and it's  
just a great experience.

Right now, I have been temping  
steadily and auditioning a lot. In  
fact, I just got cast in my first  
New York City play. The pro-  
gram opened up so many  
opportunities for me—I  
have been called in for  
some amazing projects  
through people I met during  
the semester. The Tepper  
Semester gave me a lot of con-  
fidence to just get out there and  
do it, and even though it has been  
difficult at times, it was  
definitely worth aban-  
doning my 80s movie  
senior year.

*—Alison Bennett '05  
(with her heart in '06),  
acting major*



On the eve of my departure day for Sorkin Week, I sat on my living room floor—surrounded by all of my unpacked clothes, books, a journal, and my camera—at a complete loss for words. I was going to Los Angeles for the first time, and I was going to meet one of my artistic idols, Aaron Sorkin. Not many college seniors picture their final Spring Break of college running around L.A. going to a plethora of meetings and workshops instead of going to South Beach and luxuriating in the tropical sun. I, however, was elated.

We arrived on Saturday and spent our first two days sight-seeing. Sunday we attended our first Hollywood party thrown in our honor at Aaron's home tucked away in the Hollywood hills. I kept reminding myself this surreal experience was actually happening.

After finishing our breakfast Monday morning, we congregated in the lobby of the Luxe Hotel (located in the heart of Beverly Hills on Rodeo Drive) when Malcolm [Ingram], one of our chaperoning professors, informed us of a schedule change. Aaron had invited us to sit in on the first table reading of *Studio 60 on the Sunset Strip*, his new television show that was beginning filming immediately after we left L.A.

Aaron's assistant, Lauren, met us once we arrived at Warner Bros. Aaron rushed out of his office to greet us and began enthusiastically explaining how the process of a table

reading worked. As we strolled past sound stages—the exterior sets for shows like *ER* and *Gilmore Girls*—my hands began to shake, and I could feel the adrenaline rush throughout my whole body. I never could have asked for a more euphoric moment.

Aaron first led us onto the set for the show, which was still being built. He made a point of telling us the actors would be incredibly nervous—this was their first time meeting with everyone and reading the script—and Aaron actually seemed a little nervous. He joked about time crunches and enormous budgets and never seemed to stop grinning. This was his baby; a brand new show was about to be born to the public, and we were witnessing the foundation being built. I asked him if he had thought of any clever *SU* references to slip into the scripts yet, since I had always gotten a kick out of picking up on them in episodes of *The West Wing*. He smiled and told me they just come out on the page, and he can't resist using them.

We left the sound stage and migrated to a smaller building, where we were greeted by two familiar faces. First, before we even entered the room where the reading would take place, D.L. Hughley waltzed up to us and introduced himself. We walked into the actual room, and Matthew Perry was already getting his things situated for the reading. He smiled at us and said "Hey guys!" I laughed because as the actors, producers, and the



creative team trickled in, many of them had no idea who all of these anxious, nervous college kids were. Aaron made us feel like one of the guys. We sat in chairs around the perimeter of the room while he sat at the head of a huge conference table next to the show's director, Thomas Schlamme. They were all there—Bradley Whitford, Amanda Peet, Timothy Busfield, Steven Weber, Sarah Paulson, D.L. Hughley—this cast was stellar.

Then came the biggest surprise of all. Aaron approached our group with a small stack of index cards and handed them to us. I was given two: "Julie-p. 34-39" and "Daphne-p. 42-49." He announced to the room that we were going to read in several parts. My grip tightened on the blue script I held in my hands. I was standing at this point because they had run out of chairs. I listened and anxiously awaited my time to shine. Then it happened. It came to my first scene, and like a kid in the championship round of the spelling bee, I launched into the cold reading without any fear. I read with Matthew Perry and Bradley Whitford. Even though they were across the room, I managed to look right at them as we read. It was just like a read-through for any of the plays I had done since being at SU. We were acting together, and I loved every minute of it. I even got a few laughs. My next scene was with Sarah Paulson. I was ready to take the ball and run with it at this point. Why not go for this if

it is my one big shot to act with some of the biggest names in theater and television? Once I finished I felt like I had run a marathon. I felt like I was floating on air—I was so exhilarated.

I will never forget how inspired I was that afternoon. I was able to interact with actors whose careers I aspire to emulate. I felt honored. Aaron patted me on the back after it was all over and said, "Nice job, Rachel." That right there made my whole week worthwhile. I got to give life to characters (even though they were small) that Aaron Sorkin had created. One of the biggest lessons I learned that whole week was from a talk we had with Aaron and actor Kristin Chenoweth. They told us to never think of limitations or boundaries, and "no" is the biggest "yes" we will ever get in our careers. I am so grateful for the experience I had in Los Angeles. I am now so invigorated to graduate, get out into the real world, and follow my dreams.

*—Rachel Moulton '06, musical theater major*

independent

SPirit

**The Absolutely True Story of the Syracuse International Film and Video Festival**

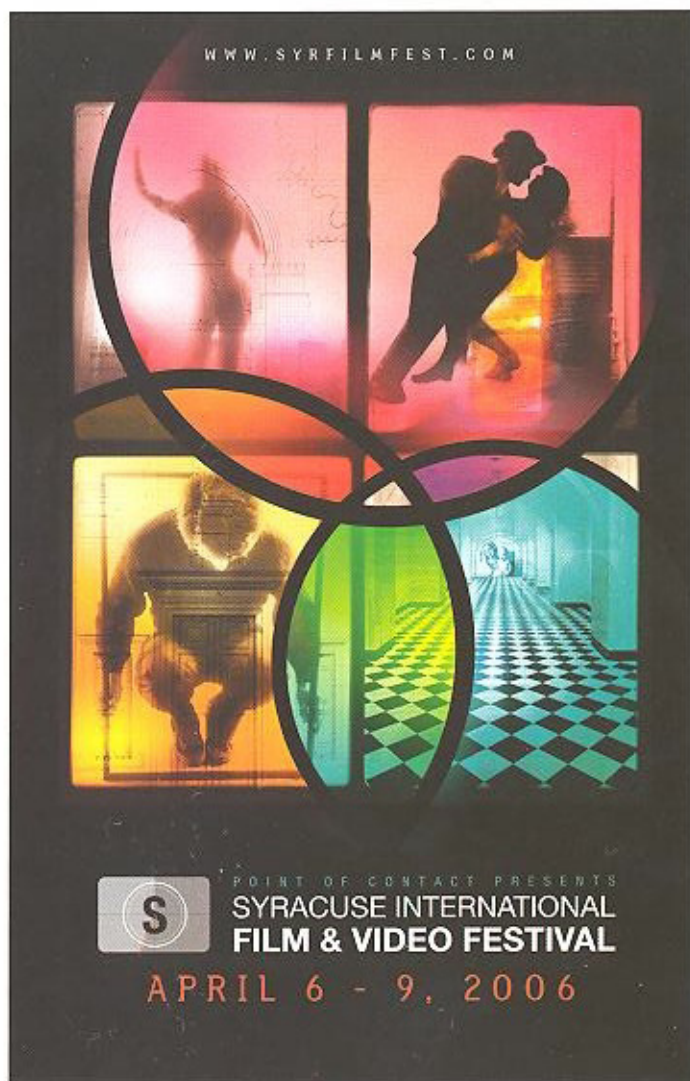


The lights dim. The house goes silent. And, the movies roll. In April, the Syracuse International Film and Video Festival (SIFVF) celebrated its third year of bringing diverse independent film and video creations—and many of the artists behind them—to venues around the community. Sponsored by Syracuse University (including the College of Visual and Performing Arts) and several community partners, the festival continues to grow, with more films and special events offered to increasing audiences who appreciate independent work. "We showcased great films and video from 32 countries," says SIFVF founder and artistic director Owen Shapiro, professor of film in VPA's Department of Transmedia.

With months of preparation involved in the festival and a variety of venues to manage, Shapiro relies on the work of many hands, including those at SU and VPA. "We have faculty and students from all over the University participate," Shapiro says. Faculty members serve as pre-screeners and write reviews for the post-festival publication, *Dossier*. VPA film student interns fill such roles as database coordinator, shipping coordinator, venue coordinator, and archivist. Other students assist with such tasks as running the projectors and recording the festival's forums.

"Our students get a lot of education they wouldn't normally expect," Shapiro says. "They meet filmmakers from all over the world and make networking connections. It's also a fun thing to do." One alumnus who assisted with the festival worked at the Sundance Film Festival and now does programming for the Tribeca Film Festival. "When people talk about professional film opportunities, they don't think about these types of jobs," Shapiro says.

Stacy Barton, a third-year graduate film student, served as festival archivist, documenting festival forums, visiting filmmaker talks, and keeping festival attendance. "I learned a lot about videography, behind-the-scenes festival preparations, curating, and filmmaking on a global scale," Barton says. She was also the producer of the promotional video for the 2005 and 2006 festivals. "I hope to curate and program for a festival in the future," she notes.



*Each year, the festival promotes itself with a distinct look.*

Another intern, Monica Hoge '06, a film major, learned different ways of filmmaking outside the Hollywood studio system and also about event production. "It has been eye-opening to see the amount of work that goes into festivals," says Hoge, who was senior administrative assistant. Among other duties, she oversaw the projectionists, managed equipment needs, and organized hosts for each of the venue sites. "What I enjoyed most was interacting with various people on all levels, from the filmmakers to the projectionists," she says.

Also helping out were SU alumni, who participated as judges and this year awarded prizes in 21 categories. One such alumnus is Jim Morris '77, G'78 (Newhouse), a producer at Pixar. Shapiro also notes the assistance of VPA graduates Sang In Lee G'96 and Wook (Steve) Heo G'04, both of Korea, who pre-screen submissions to the festival. This year's festival featured films from such countries as China, the Czech Republic, Israel, Japan, and Turkey. "We have formal relationships with 28 countries, a number of them are connected through alumni," he says.



In addition to the 130 films and videos that were shown this year, the festival collaborated with the Central New York Jazz Foundation with a screening at the Palace Theater of the 1925 silent film *His People*. The James Carney Trio composed a score for the film and performed it live. In conjunction with the festival, SU's Point of Contact Gallery hosted an exhibition, *Eye on Cinema*, curated by Pedro Cuperman, the festival's associate artistic director and an associate professor of languages, literatures, and linguistics at SU.

Another important part of the festival has become its free forums, which this year focused on women of color in entertainment and media arts; politics and economics in film; film acting; and music in film, featuring guest composers. The music forum was followed by a concert of the guest composers' music in collaboration with the Society for New Music. Also during this year's festival, a special tribute was made to Synapse, an experimental facility at SU in the 1970s that was one of the first international centers for production, postproduction, and exhibition of video art.

The festival's events build on its mission to showcase all forms of film and video expression and connect people, cultures, and ideas. Shapiro recognized the potential of such an event for the Syracuse community while touring several years ago with his film *Prisoners of Freedom*. "The festivals generate a lot of community pride and bring a community into the spotlight," he says. Shapiro and

his wife, Christine Fawcett Shapiro, who is the festival's executive director, garnered support from SU, the City of Syracuse, and other community sponsors. The couple wanted to focus on incorporating international films. "It allows people in the community to see a kind of film they normally wouldn't see in the mall cinemas," Shapiro says. Independent film festivals provide a venue for art films created outside the Hollywood production system, Barton says. "Without events like these, which are becoming more prominent and popular with both filmmakers and movie-goers alike, my work would have no place in this world," she says.

—Kathleen Haley

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# Bravi

*VPA Students and  
Faculty Have Fairy  
Tale Experience with  
Florence Opera*





Standing on their chairs, the delighted Italian school children chanted, "*Nani! Nani! Nani!*" [Dwarfs! Dwarfs! Dwarfs!]"

until the seven Setnor School of Music students dressed as dwarfs returned to the stage for another curtain call. Standing in the same theater and equally moved by the experience, Barbara Deimling, director of SU Abroad's Syracuse University in Florence (SUF) program, simply soaked in the success of the collaborative production of the modern opera, *Snow White*, at one of Italy's premiere opera houses, *Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino*. "Witnessing that kind of enthusiasm pouring out of the school children made me realize the profound impact our students can have in this community," Deimling says. "The hurdles and hard work of coordinating this cross-cultural collaboration resulted in an amazing experience for everyone involved."



The performances of American composer Luigi Zaninelli's *Snow White* in March brought together professional and student artists and musicians for a sold-out run that benefited the Meyer Children's Hospital in Florence, and anchored SUF's broader reaching initiative, *Uno Scambio da Fiavola* (A Fairy Tale Exchange). Thirteen students from the Setnor School came to Florence for a few weeks this spring to play the roles of the seven dwarfs and six handmaidens in the production, directed by Vivien Hewitt, well-known for her production of *Madame Butterfly* at the Puccini Festival at Torre del Lago. Alex Koziara, assistant professor of design/technical theater in the Department of Drama, created set and lighting for the show and taught a related SUF scenography class, in which drama students made props, masks, and crowns for the more Brothers Grimm-than-Disney-like scenery.

Fashion design and drama students in the SUF Theatrical Costume Design course created the dress for the seven dwarfs based on the designs of famous Italian fashion artist, Regina Schrecker, who donated her time and talents to the production and working with the students. "In class we've really gotten the idea of what it's like working with the director, costume designer, and each other to interpret and create outfits that are used in an actual production," fashion design student Ciel Pia '07 says. "This experience helps me see fashion as a necessity for performance."

Leading up the performances of *Snow White* at the opera house, SU student volunteers went into elementary schools around Florence to teach the children English vocabulary from the fairy tale and to act out scenes. Using flashcards, props, and costume pieces, the college students entertained more than 3,000 youths, many of whom would be among the cheering audience members at the full performance. Additionally, the Florence center initiated "An Apple for a Book" campaign, in which community members of all ages donated their favorite book in exchange for a print of an apple, painted by SUF professor Marco Klec Fallani. The SUF center donated the more than 300 books collected to a public library in Florence. The center also hosted an international conference on the Importance of Fairy Tales in Early Childhood Development in conjunction with the Meyer Children's Hospital.

The Fairy Tale initiative grew from the success of a similar collaboration between SUF and the *Maggio Musicale* last year on a production of Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*. "SUF would like to continue such artistic and cross-cultural collaborations because of their educational significance to all involved. "This year we had much more student involvement than last year, and we'd certainly like to increase such collaborations," Deimling says. "This is really what a university should be about—instilling in young people the desire to enact change and to have an impact. International education should have a component of giving back to the community in which you're studying and sharing your culture as you learn about others."

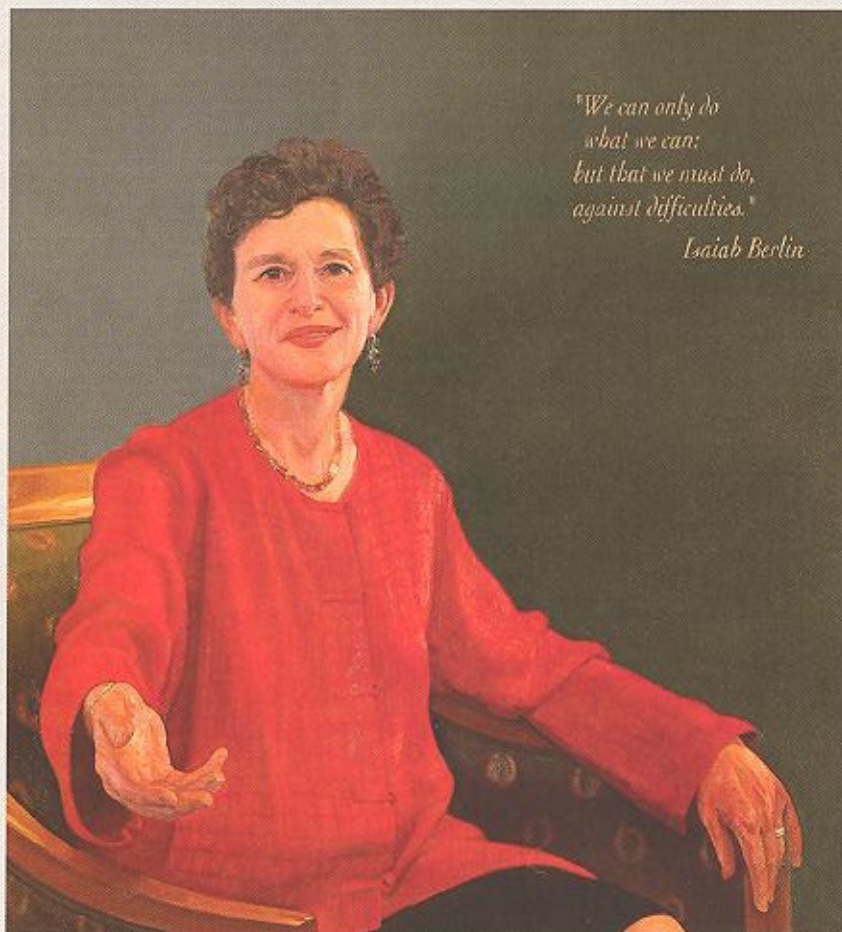
—Margaret Costello

*A happy postscript: the Teatro was so impressed with the Setnor students that it invited them to audition for its regular season production of Gianni Schicchi. Three students, Malcolm Merriweather '07 and Joseph Rinaldi '06, both music education majors, and Gregory Spock '06, a music industry major, were selected.*



## Final Words

"Art, by its nature, is about the sharing of humanity. Education, by its very nature, is about the instilling of that humanity. My hope, and my fear, is that the arts provide one of the few remaining opportunities in education for this to occur...Using the artist as an example, Professor Cornel West [Princeton University professor of religion] said that education for all persons must ultimately be about ethical substance, a sense of being 'centered' as a human being. His point was that citizenship—being a responsible and caring human being in a community—is not reducible to skills acquired. I believe that since her arrival on campus in July 2004, Chancellor Nancy Cantor has shown herself to be the embodiment of these aspirations—that the goal of education must be about the 'centering' of self in society. While Chancellor Cantor is petite in size, her presence is grand in scale. I have tried to convey that sense of presence in the portrait. I wanted the pose to exemplify that while she fills the space she inhabits with her own humanity, she welcomes all to participate and join with her in achieving this fundamental goal of education..."



*Excerpts from "What I Was Thinking: Artist's Remarks About Painting the Portrait of Chancellor Nancy Cantor" by Gary Trento, associate professor of painting in the School of Art and Design. The portrait was unveiled by Dean Carole Brzozowski at Chancellor Cantor's inaugural year speech in Hendricks Chapel.*

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